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865 693 Nevertheless, there are cases where the elder brother attempts to impose his authority and oblige a younger brother to obey his orders, building up his part. From ten years of age onward the relation between brothers and sisters becomes rougher and occasionally quarrelsome, but after passing puberty and initiation, when the girl has become a woman and the boy an adult, their relationship takes on a definite shape, to be reflected in the future friendship between the two and in the ties that will exist between the brothers and the children of the sisters, over whom they will exercise their authority and protection.

We have already described one of the aggressive acts between brothers on the part of the older toward the younger, in the theft of food behind the back of the mother or whoever represents authority /in the home/. There is another form of aggression which the younger child adopts in order to get what he wants from his elders and from his siblings: He throws himself on the ground, where he rolls and kicks, screaming and crying inconsolably. His mother punishes him to stop him from giving way to his bad temper, considering his action harmful because when big he might continue with his rages and while in that mood cause grave injury to his people and to himself. For in 152 865 reality when the Guajiro becomes furious, he goes completely out of his mind and commits deeds he would not dream of doing in his proper senses. If he cannot get his way he becomes so [762] angry /32/ that often he will hang himself, doing this in such a rage that he loses his instinct of self-preservation and even when he is half dead will insist on finishing himself off, so throwing the responsibility of his death onto the person who caused his bad temper. If his mother is unable to control these exhibitions of childish rage, it will continue with him during his youth and as a man will become increasingly worse, often causing him to leave home in the excess of his fury and giving rise to suicide when he is thwarted or opposed.

864 835 6. Delinquent acts that may appear among children about ten years old are the sexual relations between girls and their brothers when the latter are busy with their pastoral tasks and

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864 835 the girls go into the woods to round up the burros or for other chores. We know that if the mother learns of these happenings she immediately hands out punishment; we also know that it is considered very bad because of its prematurity, because of the act in itself, and because of reasons of blood relationship; but we do not know in what way punishment is meted out or the reaction and the social and family attitude when it becomes known. The fact is that the mother with girls of that age prevents their meeting their brothers outside her personal vigilance. The disregard of that prohibition even if it is not presumed that such a delinquent act 864 has taken place leads to punishment, because the mother knows 581 that these prepubertal relations will later have a decisive influence on the girl when she seeks marriage, as the future husband expects her to come virgin to him and the payment he makes for her includes such a concept. If she is not he has the right to claim a compensation payment and to obtain the legal refund of part of the animals he has paid; or they are obliged to admit it before the marriage, with the prospect that they will be denounced or the hoped-for /marriage/ purchase will not go through. In any case, with foreknowledge or without, the loss of her virginity reduces the value of a marriageable woman in the eyes of the men seeking her as wife.

861 There are punishments of various kinds. Some are corporal and consist of striking the child, and these are the most frequent. They slap them on the mouth when they are insolent when given an order or when they give a sharp answer to the father or mother. They are punched and kicked or are whipped with lassos or riding whips, with twigs from the woods or cudgels, but the mother generally beats them with a bunch of nettles when they commit any kind of naughtiness, such as throwing themselves on the floor and rolling around from temper, sneaking out of the house without permission, disobeying an order, etc. /33/ In order to punish them the mother tries to take them by surprise and catch them firmly by the arm or hand so that she may punish them before they can escape her. She beats their legs or shoulders with the nettles as these parts are usually bare. This punishment is very painful

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857 462 A joint duty of children of both sexes is the care of their younger brothers or sisters when circumstances require it, though this is mainly performed by girls when there are any of the right age.

b) Girls. Little girls five years old are given small tasks, such as carrying messages, going to the fields to take some small item to the father or an uncle, drawing water in vessels so that the elders may bring it on burros up to the house. At six or seven they begin to do some cooking. From ten to twelve years, that is to say at the prepubertal age, they are initiated into the different ways of weaving, and they can go alone from [835] one settlement to another. It is at this time that they occasionally have sexual relations with their brothers or with their father.

857 462 252 Almost from the time she can look after herself -- toward three or four years of age -- the girl assists her mother in all her work, especially when she is the eldest and when she belongs to a family with few economic resources. In the kitchen she learns to prepare food such as mazamorra, bollos /rolls/, and arepa /ground-corn griddlecakes/; to hull corn and grind it with the traditional equipment, the pestle and mortar made of stone; to light and keep the fire going; to handle the pots on it and build new hearths; and, in time, to prepare the various kinds of chicha and the customary soups for special occasions, to make use of the different fruits, both wild and cultivated, and to serve up various local dishes such as sancocho de chivo /goat-meat stew/, the way of preparing meat etc., until, having arrived at the moment of puberty, she is on the whole acquainted with all the customary culinary procedures.

Other work they are taught to do quite young is fetching water and firewood as well as a series of household chores such as house cleaning, taking care of the younger children, and at times feeding them and keeping them clean. They are sent to the woods to bring in the burros that are used for carrying water or fruit or serve for the women to ride on. /46/

857 462 232 They also start to lend a hand in the harvest and accompany the women when they collect wild fruits such as olives,

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836 The virginity of the single woman is becoming very rare in La Guajira. Premarital relations have been occurring with greater frequency in recent years as a consequence of the social disintegration of this indigeneous group, caused by a multiplicity of reasons, among which stand out: the influence of the so-called white groups, among whom free union is common practice; emigration to regions such as Venezuela, where the Indian women break away from the norms of their ancestors and find an atmosphere which does not resent the sexual adventures of women but rather stimulates them; the scarcity and hunger in certain regions which push the inhabitants toward the urban centers of the peninsula, where the woman gives herself in exchange for the wherewithal to satisfy her vital needs of food and dress, an attitude which her relatives recognize and tolerate because, indirectly, it also helps them. The premarital relations forced by circumstances or encouraged by them have been creating a social class of women which previously did not exist nor could fit within her social organization: the prostitute. It must be noted that it is the mestizo woman (mixture of Indian with white or negro) who more easily takes this road.

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Also one has to take into account the premature premarital relations that have always existed in La Guajira and which take place between the girls and their brothers, and even their fathers, when the girls are about ten or more, when they go to the fields or the countryside in general and meet the boys who are devoting themselves to pasturing. (Cf. Chap. II.)

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836 The common type of furtive sexual relations of the adult
558 woman causes her to drop in social esteem and particularly in
178 that of the men, producing, indirectly, the phenomenon that virginity as a basis for marriage has become overvalued. Before, it was a fact that was logically expected as an essential, and the lack of this condition created social and psychic problems.

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582 588 evident, a Catholic missionary married them according to the Catholic ritual. This act seemed a crime to the natives: that a Guajiro woman should be legally married to her maternal uncle was impossible to understand. Rumors and a kind of social vacuum began to surround the pair, and even threats, to the point that, seeing life was becoming impossible for them among their own people, they abandoned all they possessed and migrated to a distance, where there would be no Guajiro who knew their story, in order that they might not have to put up with the social situation which their illegal conduct toward their traditions had provoked.

582 The pure Guajiro is the one who preserves in its most extreme form the principles of exogamy among the different family groups. Mestizo men, educated and influenced by the kinship principles followed by whites, reduce the wideness of the scope of this prohibition against the marriage of individuals within the same clan and marry /95/ female first cousins in the maternal line, defying the natural revulsion of the Indians who still consider such unions incestuous.

835 We must note again that it is not rare for girls before puberty to cohabit with their own brothers (in the Guajiro sense) and with their father, naturally without pregnancy as a consequence, but with the loss of their virginity. Guajiro mythology contains a [773] story of a girl who, having become pregnant by her own father, overcome by her physical condition and the social ostracism which her action had provoked, hanged herself, thus establishing this type of suicide as a means of a woman's doing away with herself when her wishes are opposed, especially in cases where she is obliged to marry a man whom she dislikes or in circumstances similar to those in the story.

These incestuous sexual relations are frequent in nearly every part of La Guajira. They happen when little girls go from one settlement to another carrying a message or to the woods in search of the pack animals or of fruit, at the same time that the boys are there looking after the livestock. Usually these relations cannot be considered as a violation, as the girls consent willingly, a state

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835 of affairs of which we could find no evidence after puberty and the seclusion had taken place. It appears that the only case we can quote is the one referred to above and which is preserved in the traditional lore.

583 Catholic marriage. Guajiro marriage is the basis of all the legal organization of the peninsula, because in it, represented by the marriage payment, are concentrated all economic life and social laws. For these reasons Catholic marriage encounters much opposition on the part of the native and causes a series of problems for those who contract it.

The first of these is that such a marriage is done outside of the family social organization and leaves whoever contracts it dependent on their own efforts to confront the social collectivity of the peninsula. We shall see why: If contracting a Catholic marriage means for the woman that her relatives do not receive the customary payment as recompense for bringing her up and as a backing in the future for her and her desendants, the system of mutual aid between consanguineous groups which demands repayment at some future date, will create a very difficult situation for her father as an active member of the clan, since, on not receiving money for the first daughter that marries, he cannot comply with the system of repayment and mutual help, which his relatives then resent and which diminishes his prestige, since it was with this payment that he expected to pay the debts he incurred when he bought his wife. /96/

The woman who marries according to the Catholic rite also encounters another series of problems with her consanguineous group: Her husband, although legal, is an intruder and the direct cause of all the troubles which overtake them. It is difficult for them to tolerate him because, besides being the person who separated their relative from her consanguineous ties, it was he who obliged her to break with all legal tradition, putting them all in a secondary role. He acquires, then, the standing of a lover, because they feel that such a marriage is as illegal as is having a concubine in our culture. He has acquired a wife without paying for her and for this reason is considered to have usurped a right

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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riage. A Guajiro woman has no right to sell her body. The law does not recognize prostitution.

A married woman's relatives and clan do not leave her entirely in her husband's hands. He may not do as he likes with her, nor cause her suffering. Suffering and discomfort she is bound to experience in childbirth, however, and of that he is the primary cause; thus whether as a result of legal or illegal relations, the man must compensate the mother for her confinement by giving her family a few cattle. The woman herself may not eat their meat under any circumstances.

Originally the Guajiro clans were exogamous; members were not allowed to marry within the clan. That is no longer insisted upon, but not only brothers and sisters, but maternal males and cousins on the mother's side, are still reckoned among the forbidden degrees. It is unthinkable that an Indian girl should marry her maternal uncle; that would be like having her father for her husband. It once happened that an uncle and niece had a secret relationship and the girl became pregnant. A monk married them, but the Indians regarded the relationship as a heinous crime and the whole district reacted so violently that the couple had to leave the peninsula and go far away, where there was no risk of meeting members of their tribe.

There is nothing to prevent an Indian getting himself several wives. Infrequently white men have married into Guajiro families and they too have had to pay a bride-price. A number of poor Creoles have contracted Guajiro marriages with poor girls. I have already mentioned how foreign oil workers made Guajiro marriages. In those early days there were no arrangements made for employees' families, and the Guajiro girls suited those primitive conditions very well, though as a rule such marriages with Indian girls were very short-lived, as those of the Creoles with them still are. The girl is soon abandoned, if that can be done without risk, the girl's family in such cases being powerless. So the Indians told me.

The monks had already told us that where Creoles had married Guajiro girls of good family, those marriages had